

**Eickholt, Brad**

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**From:** bbelden@sirisonline.com%inter2 [bbelden@sirisonline.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 11, 2005 2:13 PM  
**To:** FarmBill  
**Subject:** Farm Bill Forum Comments

**Categories:** Farm Bill  
**Attachments:** FarmBillCommentsManagerPLAugust11.doc



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Dear Mr. Johannis,

I am attaching a word document of text that I want to enter into the Farm Bill Forum Record.

If you have problems opening the document feel free to contact me via this e-mail and I will send it in another format.

Sincerely,  
Bill Belden

August 11, 2005

Mikè Johanns, Secretary of Agriculture  
US Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Johanns;

I am Bill Belden, Project Manager for the Chariton Valley Biomass project in Southeast Iowa. This project is a "Biomass Power for Rural Development" project funded through the U.S. Department of Energy. The premise of the project is to co-fire switchgrass with coal in an electric generating station located near Ottumwa, Iowa.

We are in the final stages of research and development, and hope to commercialize a biomass project in the next 18 months. We could use the help of the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency to transition acres into some type of energy conservation reserve program or a pilot project to encourage farmers to produce a biomass energy project. An energy conservation reserve program makes sense as a transition out of CRP, or a logical transition from anyone using potential new CRP sign up to get additional fragile lands into a conserving or alternative production systems. We want to assist your department in exploring these and any other possibilities that position agriculture to provide America with energy independence.

Current CRP mid term management practices have and will drastically reduce the number of potential acres that farmers and landowners could pledge to a commercial venture in our area of burning switchgrass to produce electricity, a life after CRP if you will. Could you encourage the different departments under your agency to work with projects like our "Biomass Power for Rural Development" project to use other tools to enhance wildlife habitat rather than destroying mono-species in CRP acres as a midterm management practice?

I want to thank you for touring the United States to get input for the 2007 Farm Bill. I thank you for considering this suggestion as future farm policy ideas.

Sincerely,

Bill Belden, Project Manager  
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